IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A touch panel assembly for a beverage dispenser, comprising:

a back panel defining an interior chamber;

a valve board disposed in the interior chamber, the valve board including a light source;

an electrode board disposed in the interior chamber in front of the valve board, the electrode board including an electrode trace that develops an electrode field; and

a front panel mounted to the back panel, wherein the electrode board diffuses light from the light source thereby masking the electrode trace such that the light is visible through the electrode board and the front panel without interference from the electrode trace~~, thereby providing a visual effect to a beverage dispenser~~.

Claim 2 (original): The touch panel assembly according to claim 1, wherein the electrode board is translucent.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The touch panel assembly according to claim 1, wherein the valve board further comprises a controller that controls the light source such that the light source performs lighting routines.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The touch panel assembly according to claim 1, further comprising a light separator/reflector disposed in the interior chamber of the back panel between the electrode board and the valve board to separate the light from the light source into distinct lighting areas.

Claim 5 (original): The touch panel assembly according to claim 4, wherein the light separator/reflector diffuses the light source to display a more uniform lighting scheme.

Claim 6 (original): The touch panel assembly according to claim 1, wherein the light source comprises light emitting diodes (LEDs).

Claim 7 (original): The touch panel assembly according to claim 1, further comprising:

a proximity sensor that activates lighting routines when a field of the proximity sensor is penetrated.

Claim 8 (original): The touch panel assembly according to claim 7, wherein the proximity sensor field is penetrated by a person.

Claim 9 (original): A touch panel assembly for a beverage dispenser, comprising:

a back panel defining an interior chamber;

a valve board disposed in the interior chamber, the valve board including a controller; and

an electrode board disposed in the interior chamber in front of the valve board, the electrode board including a first electrode trace electrically coupled to the controller, wherein the first electrode trace develops an electrode field, further wherein the controller interprets an interruption in the electrode field as a selection of a drink flavor for dispensing.

Claim 10 (original): The touch panel according to claim 9, further comprising:

a front panel mounted to the back panel, such that the front panel is in close proximity to the electrode board, wherein interruptions in the electrode field are discernable through the front panel.

Claim 11 (original): The touch panel assembly according to claim 9, wherein the electrode board further comprises a second electrode trace to create a second electrode field.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The touch panel assembly according to claim 11, wherein the controller interprets interruptions in the electrode fields of the first electrode trace and the second electrode trace as separate and distinct flavor selections.

Claim 13 (original): The touch panel assembly according to claim 11, wherein the two electrode traces are used for a same flavor selection.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The touch panel assembly according to claim 13, wherein the controller interprets the electrode field of the first electrode trace and the electrode field of the second electrode trace as a same selection, thereby providing a major brand with an increased presence on a front of the beverage dispenser.

Claim 15 (original): The touch panel assembly according to claim 11, wherein the first electrode trace and the second electrode trace overlap.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The touch panel assembly according to claim 15, wherein the controller interprets an overlapped portion of the electrode traces as a third user input location.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The touch panel assembly according to claim 13, wherein a configuration of the touch panel assembly may be changed from a dual flavor touch area to a single flavor touch area, as well as from a single flavor touch area to a dual flavor touch area.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The touch panel assembly according to claim 14, wherein a configuration of the touch panel assembly may be changed from a dual flavor touch area to a single flavor touch area, as well as from a single flavor touch area to a dual flavor touch area.

Claim 19 (original): The touch panel assembly according to claim 17, wherein the touch panel assembly may be configured on the dispenser.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The touch panel assembly of claim 9, wherein a user input is a touch on the front panel.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The touch panel assembly of claim 9, wherein the controller activates the beverage dispenser to dispense a beverage drink responsive to an interruption in the electrode field.

Claims 22-69 (canceled).